

During the previous Easter (March, 1880) the veteran author had received Daudet, Zola, Charpentier, Maupassant, and Goncourt at his country place, and Goncourt has related in his "Journal" how thoroughly they enjoyed Flaubert's paternal hospitality, and how on Easter Monday they lingered in Rouen, ferreting among old curiosity shops, playing billiards, and planning a *diner fin* at the principal hotel. When, however, they wished to give their order, consternation fell on them: it was a holiday; all the provision shops were closed, the hotel larder was virtually empty, and the *diner fin* resolved itself into veal cutlets and cheese. That amusing experience was still in Zola's mind when, on May 8, he received at Me'dan this laconic telegram from Maupassant: " Flaubert dead." Dead — and they had left him so gay and so full of life and health.! Zola was profoundly attached to Flaubert, and the tidings quite unmanned him. On May 11 he started for Le Croisset and attended the 'funeral, of which he has left a deeply interesting account, instinct with all the grief of one who has lost a near and dear friend. In these later years various English versions of some of Flaubert's books have been published, but, so far as the present writer is aware, no editor or publisher has thought of utilising Zola's

account of Flaubert
as an introduction to a translation. Yet that
account is
perhaps Zola's best work as an essayist, — full
of interest,
and much of it admirable in tone and style.
One may say,
too, that anybody wishing to form an accurate
opinion of
Gustave Flaubert, both as a writer and as a
man, cannot
do better than read the hundred pages which
Zola devoted
to him in his "Eomanciers Naturalistes."

But another blow fell on Zola in 1880. In
October his